

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of securing a retaining clip having a body member having a first side and a hook flange and at least one lateral flange extending therefrom to an intervertebral disc replacement device having at least one flange defining at least one bone screw hole for receipt therethrough of a bone screw and defining at least one mounting hole, comprising the steps of:

removingly engaging said retaining clip to a first end of a first applicator arm of an applicator having said first applicator arm and a second applicator arm;

inserting said applicator into a patient treatment area having said intervertebral disc replacement device installed therein;

placing said hook flange of said body member of said retaining clip over said at least one flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device;

applying a closing force to said first and second applicator arms such that said hook flange securingly engages said at least one flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device and a portion of said at least one lateral flange extends over a portion of said bone screw;

disengaging said first applicator arm from said retaining clip; and
removing said applicator from said patient treatment area.

2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein during said applying step at least one attachment member protruding from said first side of said body member of said retaining clip is received within said at least one mounting hole.

3. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein during said applying step a clip member protruding from said hook flange in a direction toward said first side of said body member is received within a recess in said flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device.

4. The method as recited in claim 1, said removingly engaging step

comprising the further step of inserting a protruding member extending from said first end of said first applicator arm at least partially into an opening extending at least partially through said body member.

5. The method as recited in claim 4, said protruding member extending in a direction substantially along a direction of an axial length of said first applicator arm.

6. The method as recited in claim 5, said opening in said body member being at least in part formed in an attachment member protruding from said first side of said body member of said retaining clip for receipt within said at least one mounting hole of said intervertebral disc replacement device.

7. A method of securing first and second retaining clips each having a body member having a first side and a hook flange and at least one lateral flange extending therefrom to an intervertebral disc replacement device having first and second flanges each flange defining at least one bone screw hole for receipt therethrough of a bone screw and defining at least one mounting hole, comprising the steps of:

removingly engaging said first retaining clip to a first end of a first applicator arm of an applicator and said second retaining clip to a first end of a second applicator arm of said applicator;

inserting said applicator into a patient treatment area having said intervertebral disc replacement device installed therein;

placing a first hook flange of said first retaining clip over said first flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device and a second hook flange of said second retaining clip over said second flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device;

applying a closing force to said first and second applicator arms such that said first hook flange securingly engages said first flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device and said second hook flange securingly engages said second flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device and a portion of said at least one lateral flange of a first body portion of said first retaining clip extends over a portion

of a first bone screw and a portion of said at least one lateral flange of a second body portion of said second retaining clip extends over a portion of a second bone screw;
disengaging said applicator arms from said retaining clips; and
removing said applicator from said patient treatment area.

8. The method as recited in claim 7, wherein during said applying step at least one attachment member protruding from a first side of said body member of said first retaining clip is received within said at least one mounting hole of said first flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device and at least one attachment member protruding from a second side of said body member of said second retaining clip is received within said at least one mounting hole of said second flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device.

9. The method as recited in claim 7, wherein during said applying step a first clip member protruding from a first hook flange in a direction toward said first side of a first body member is received within a recess in said first flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device and a second clip member protruding from a second hook flange in a direction toward said first side of a second body member is received within a recess in said second flange of said intervertebral disc replacement device.

10. The method as recited in claim 7, said removingly engaging step comprising the further steps of inserting a first protruding member extending from said first end of said first applicator arm at least partially into a first opening extending at least partially through said body member of said first retaining clip and inserting a second protruding member extending from said first end of said second applicator arm at least partially into a second opening extending at least partially through said body member of said second retaining clip.

11. The method as recited in claim 10, said first and second protruding members extending in directions substantially along directions of axial lengths of said first and second applicator arms.

12. The method as recited in claim 11, said first and second openings in said body members being at least in part formed in attachment members protruding from said first sides of said body members of said first and second retaining clips for receipt within first and second at least one mounting holes of said intervertebral disc replacement device.